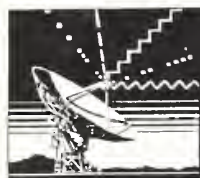


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# Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture • Office of Communications • Washington, DC 20250-1300

Letter No. 2724

July 28, 1995

**OVERWHELMING RESPONSE TO PROGRAM SIGN-UP** -- Landowners offered more than eight times the amount of acres the U.S. Department of Agriculture can accept for enrollment into the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP). More than 3,700 landowners nationwide offered over 570,000 acres for enrollment into the voluntary, incentive-based program, but funding is available for only 60,000 to 70,000 acres. USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service funds the Wetland Reserve Program which protects and restores wetlands to provide habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife, helps purify water supplies and helps to absorb flood waters. USDA purchases easement from the landowners for wetland areas previously drained and used for agricultural production. Under provisions of the WRP, landowners cannot be paid more than the agricultural value of the land prior to wetland conversion. Landowners should know by early September if their acreage has been accepted into the program. **Contact: Diana Morse (202) 720-4772.**

**COTTON EXPORTS HEADED FOR RECORD GROWTH** -- If cotton exports stay on track, they could reach the highest level in nearly 70 years, say officials at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Exports are expected to rise to \$4 billion in the 1994/1995 marketing year, up to 2.1 million tons. Three factors are contributing to the rise, according to Gus Schumacher, the Administrator of USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service. Schumacher says strong cotton consumption generated by a strengthening world economy, a consumer preference for natural fibers and tight world supplies have helped push cotton prices to record levels this year. Cotton exports are part of the reason USDA is forecasting a record \$51.5 billion in U.S. agricultural exports, an \$8 billion increase from fiscal year 1994. Poor cotton production and low stocks led to China's dominance of world cotton imports. They are expected to import about one-fourth of U.S. cotton exports, worth nearly \$1 billion. The Latin American market has grown over 350 percent over the past three years and demand is expected to increase. U.S. also gained market share in Japan and Indonesia after a drought reduced Australia's cotton crop. **Contact: Marlene Phillips (202) 720-2061.**

**ACREAGE REDUCTION FOR 1996 WHEAT PROGRAM?** -- Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman says he does not intend to require wheat producers to idle land for the 1996 wheat program. Because the authority to implement a wheat program expires with the 1995 crops, the announcement is meant to indicate to producers what the 1996 wheat program requirements will be, but could change with major fluctuations in market conditions. Glickman pointed out, "Official announcement of the provisions of the 1996 wheat program cannot be made until new farm legislation is passed by Congress and signed into law by the President. However, wheat farmers will be making 1996 planting decisions in the upcoming weeks and they need to know as much as possible about next year's program." A tight supply/demand situation is expected in the United States and abroad, so Glickman says producers should plan for no acreage reduction in their wheat plantings. **Contact: Bruce Merkle (202) 720-8206.**

**GLICKMAN PLANS ASIAN TRAVEL** -- Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman will travel to six countries in Asia next month to see how well USDA market development programs are working. Also, he will consult with government officials on issues vital to agricultural trade. Secretary Glickman will visit Japan, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong and South Korea. He will look at how the U.S. can build even further on the successes in the Asian market. "Asia is the most dynamic region of the world for U.S. agricultural trade," said Glickman. Countries on the Agriculture Secretary's itinerary will purchase \$16.5 billion in U.S. agricultural products in 1995, almost one third of U.S. total exports. **Contact: Lynn K. Goldsbrough (202) 720-3930.**

**A SUMMER REPORT CARD** -- The "Healthy Eating Index" is a USDA tool to measure how well Americans' diets conform to federal standards of nutrition. It's also like a report card on how well Americans follow healthy eating recommendations. Developed by USDA's Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion, the index results find that diets of most Americans need improvement. Of the people surveyed, 75 percent had index scores falling between 51 and 80 out of a possible 100. The average score was just under 64 for the two years studied. The index measures 10 components to assess overall diet quality. They include how well a diet conforms to federal government recommendations for consumption of grains, vegetables, fruits, milk products and meat. The index also measures consumption of fat, saturated fat, cholesterol, sodium and overall quality of the diet. Other key findings indicate less than one third of the people surveyed eat the recommended number of servings of meat and milk and fewer than one out of five people eat the recommended number of servings of fruits, grains and vegetables. **Contact: Jim Borland (202) 690-0469.**

**MARKET FOR U.S. SWEET CHERRIES** -- Export opportunities for U.S. sweet cherries just got better with the opening of the South African market. Administrator of USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service Gus Schumacher says the first shipment has already landed, presenting U.S. growers of sweet cherries and other stone fruit with a new and potentially lucrative market. An agreement to lift a restriction on imports of U.S. stone fruits was concluded and the first shipment of sweet cherries reached South Africa on July 2. Although weather problems in some U.S. areas will reduce sales this year, higher export prices could offset the reduction in tonnage, says Schumacher. He says the demand for U.S. sweet cherries continues to expand. **Contact: Eric Van Chantfort (202) 720-9443.**

**DESERT PLANTS LIVE WITH HELP FROM FUNGI** -- Fungi living in the desert sand may be the reason desert plants can survive on little water and in scorching heat. U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists have uncovered three important types of fungi on plant roots which help plants survive in such adverse conditions. USDA plant geneticist Jerry Barrow says the fungi safeguard or store vital, limited nutrients in desert grasses and shrubs and then slowly release them as a survival technique. Barrow says the fungi also appear to play a role in protecting plants against taking in excessive, toxic levels of minerals and salts. Even though scientists knew the fungi existed, Barrow says no one thought they were important enough to unearth and identify. Now scientists have uncovered bacterial colonies growing with the fungi which dissolve sand, releasing minerals for plant use and generating new soil. Barrow is hopeful further research will allow them to use the information to repair arid Southwestern rangeland. **Contact: Cynthia A. Eck (301) 734-5931.**



**FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE**

**AGRICULTURE USA # 1991** -- An update on "Water 2000" is the topic for this week's Agriculture USA. Gary Crawford gives an update on the effort to bring clean, running water to every American home. (Weekly cassette -- five minute documentary).

**CONSUMER TIME # 1470** -- A school lunch challenge. Growing evergreens to enhance landscapes. Using food thermometers is important for food safety. Cotton is king once again. A new fish market halfway around the world. (Weekly cassette -- consumer features).

**AGRITAPE FEATURES # 1983** -- Big sign-up for Wetlands Reserve Program. A slow down in beef expansion? Russia's grain import needs. Hog prices stay stronger, longer. Heat wave wreaks havoc on egg producers, but poultry industry can rebound. A meat agreement with Korea. (Weekly cassette -- news features).

**UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE** -- Monday, July 31, dairy world markets and trade; agricultural prices. Tuesday, August 1, world horticultural trade and export opportunities; weekly weather and crops. Friday, August 4, poultry slaughter. Tuesday, August 8, weekly weather and crops. Thursday, August 10, crop production report for cotton and citrus; world agricultural supply and demand for cotton. Friday, August 11, crop production report; world agricultural supply and demand; cotton and wool outlook. **These are USDA reports we know about in advance. Our newslines carry many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup.**

**USDA RADIO NEWSLINES (202) 488-8358 or 8359.**

**COMREX ENCODED (202) 720-2545**

Material changed at 5:00 p.m., ET, each working day and 10:30 a.m. on crop report days.

**FROM OUR TELEVISION SERVICE**

**ACTUALITIES** -- President Bill Clinton, Vice President Al Gore and Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman talk about building community partnerships through Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities. Under Secretary of Agriculture Ellen Haas gives Americans a report card on healthy eating. Natural Resources Conservation Service Bob Misso talks about overwhelming response to Wetlands Reserve Program sign-up.

**UPCOMING** -- Lynn Wyvill reports on USDA research into snowflakes that is helping forecast water supplies.

**ATTENTION BROADCASTERS:** There are some satellite changes in next week's television newsfeed. Please make a note of them.

Thursday, August 3, 3:45 to 4:00 p.m. EDT. Galaxy 6, Transponder 1, Channel 1, Downlink Frequency 3720 MHz, Audio 6.2 and 6.8. Monday, August 7, from 11:00 to 11:15 a.m. EDT. Galaxy 6, Transponder 1, Channel 1, downlink frequency 3720 MHz, Audio 6.2 and 6.8.

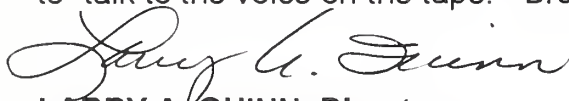
## OFF MIKE

**NAFB PRESIDENT...**Joe Cornely (WRFD, Columbus, OH) was hospitalized this week recovering from back surgery July 26. He plans to be home in a few days and back on the job soon. **Heather McConnell**, a senior intern from Ohio State University, is wishing him a speedy recovery because she is holding the reins for their three-person farm news department this week. **Valerie Parks** is traveling internationally in Russia and China for two weeks with a group led by the U.S. Feed Grains Council. To make life even more interesting, WRFD is moving to new studios in September. Joe will preside over the National Association of Farm Broadcasters (NAFB) convention in Kansas City in November. Best wishes to Joe, Heather and Valerie during this challenging period.

**GOLD AWARD...**for service to the agricultural community was presented to **Chuck Early** (WNIX, Greenville, MS) at a recent convention held by the Mississippi Association of Broadcasters. Chuck says hot weather continues to rule in the Magnolia state, but cotton is in good to excellent shape. Rice is in good condition, and the state soybean acreage is in fair to good condition. Chuck is in his 26th year of farm broadcasting.

**NEW JOB...**awaits **Don Wick** (KWOA, Worthington, MN) at WNAX, Yankton, SD. He becomes their farm director in mid-August replacing **Gene Williams**. Don is currently vice president of the National Association of Farm Broadcasters and becomes president-elect in November. He will join **Judy Stratman** and **Patty Burry** on the WNAX farm broadcasting team. Don was farm director at KWOA for eight years.

**WELCOME CALL...**to our **Brenda Curtis-Heiken** came from **John Williams** (KWTR, Austin, TX) this week. John reports that he enjoys our weekly radio cassette feature service and was pleased to "talk to the voice on the tape." Brenda reminded him of our daily newslines service, too.



**LARRY A. QUINN, Director**  
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